NIE 100-5-59
3 February 1959

SECRET

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Nº 34

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE

NUMBER 100-5-59

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FREE WORLD AND THE COMMUNIST BLOC OF GROWING NUCLEAR CAPABILITIES

(b) (3)

Submitted by the

DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of this estimate: The Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and The Joint Staff.

Concurred in by the

UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

on 3 February 1959. Concurring were The Director of Intelligence and Research, Department of State; the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army; the Assistant Chief of Naval Operations for Intelligence, Department of the Navy; the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF; the Director for Intelligence, The Joint Staff; the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, Special Operations; the Director of the National Security Agency, and the Atomic Energy Commission Representative to the USIB. The Federal Bureau of Investigation abstained, the subject being outside of their jurisdiction.

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EO 12356, Sec
FPC/MJR by NARA 10 21 94
Concurrence No. 116-(10)

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IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FREE WORLD AND THE COMMUNIST BLOC OF GROWING NUCLEAR CAPABILITIES

THE PROBLEM

To estimate the effects of increasing capabilities for nuclear warfare on public attitudes and behavior and on national policies in the Communist Bloc and the Free World.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The impressive developments in nuclear weapons delivery systems over the past year or so have not produced basic changes in popular attitudes in the non-Communist world. These attitudes continue to reflect a mixture of apathy and fatalistic resignation, fear of the consequences of nuclear war, and, particularly in Western Europe, acceptance of nuclear weapons as essential to defense and national status and prestige. In the main, peoples and governments appear to be making a gradual and steady adjustment to the threats inherent in the existence of nuclear weapons and we believe that future developments are not likely to produce any sudden or marked changes in present attitudes and policies. *(Paras. 9–10, 49)*

2. It is possible, however, that the wedding of nuclear explosives with ballistic missiles will produce fundamental shifts in these attitudes and official policies. Such changes could come with little warning in the midst of a crisis situation which served to crystallize the ferment, fears, or newly formulated concepts of the age. *(Para. 56)*

3. Opposition to the testing of nuclear weapons continues strong throughout the world, especially in Japan, India, and in parts of Western Europe. But in most Western countries this opposition is subordinated to the view that nuclear weapons are essential to defense and that a test ban should be made effective by measures of inspection and control. There is great interest in disarmament, including various propositions for disengagement, as a means of reducing tensions and the dangers of war. By-and-large, the public demands caution in situations involving the risk of great power

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involvement and there is considerable support for UN intervention to observe, control, and police areas in which there is a threat to the peace. *(Paras. 13–14, 22–24)*

4. Most non-Communist governments display similar attitudes of caution and concern over the nuclear situation. In Asia and the Middle East the nuclear situation continues to reinforce neutralist sentiments which derive from cultural and other factors. The Western European governments are highly sensitive to popular pressures for measures to reduce the dangers of war, and they consider it necessary, and even desirable to explore possibilities for negotiations with the USSR. *(Paras. 35, 38–40)*

5. Nevertheless, Soviet pressures and advances in weapons technology have not caused these governments, and others in the Free World depending on the US deterrent, to alter their posture or alignment. Many governments, including those of the NATO powers, are able to lead the public to accept the proposition that participation in an alliance whose strategy rests on the maintenance of a nuclear deterrent is the best guarantee of security. *(Paras. 32–33)*

6. The rapid pace of technological development will create serious problems for the US and the world. There may be doubts as to who has the lead in modern weapons, and it may become increasingly difficult to convince the peoples and governments of Western Europe — and other parts of the world — that the deterrent is in fact effective. Fears of a surprise or "pre-emptive" Soviet attack may grow. In those nations which depend upon the US for protection, fears may also increase as to whether the US remains willing to risk general nuclear war in order to defend their vital interests. In view of the foregoing, certain nations might lean toward neutralism in an effort to gain security through accommodation. *(Paras. 50–52)*

7. A period of rapid change in weapons development and of uncertainty as to the relative balance of military power could put an increasing premium on striking the first blow. As the time period required for preparation of a devastating attack diminishes, the problem of interpreting the intent of the other side — particularly during periods of crisis when precautionary military activities had been initiated by both sides — will become even more critical. The relatively greater certainty of retaliation resulting from the development of mobile missile systems or hardened sites would strengthen the operation of the deterrent on either side. Even so, either side might decide that the deterrent effect of the other side's strength or posture was outweighed by the necessity to launch the first strike as the best hope for survival.[1] *(Paras. 53–54)*

8. Barring an effective disarmament agreement, there will probably be a gradual spread of nuclear capabilities to some additional countries. Nevertheless, we do not foresee any early lessening of the present strong political and psychological restraints on their use. *(Paras. 48, 57)*

[1] For reservations of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army, and the Assistant Chief of Naval Operations for Intelligence, Department of the Navy, regarding this conclusion, see footnote to paragraph 54.

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DISCUSSION

I. INTRODUCTION

9. The destructive power of nuclear weapons has long been in the public consciousness. However, the advances in delivery capability represented by the satellites and by the missile test programs appear to the world as reflecting a new dimension in the threat. The opinion is widely held that the time is near at hand when hasty action, perhaps as a result of a faulty estimate of the intentions of the opposing side, can unleash a devastating attack with high-yield weapons delivered by ballistic missiles. The world was not prepared for Sputnik and the compound reaction of admiration, shock, and apprehension was profound. The reassessment of national policies touched off by this evidence of Soviet technological capability is still in progress.

10. However, with over a year's perspective since Sputnik it can be said that no great and sudden changes in attitudes or policies have as yet occurred as a result of the recent demonstrations of growing nuclear capabilities. In fact, the evidence available indicates that peoples and governments are becoming more steady in their reactions to technological advances in the nuclear weapons field. In general, there appears to be a greater degree of fatalism and a greater realization that there are no quick and easy solutions, and that it is necessary to work within the context of familiar institutions and methods for an easing of the nuclear threat.

II. POPULAR REACTIONS AND ATTITUDES

A. The Non-Communist World

11. There is considerable unanimity in world opinion on several general propositions with respect to the implications of growing nuclear capabilities. For example, the popular belief in the non-Communist world is that the testing of nuclear weapons involves some degree of risk to the human race; the general assumption around the world now is that large-scale hostilities between the two great powers would almost certainly mean nuclear war; and practically all people believe that a general nuclear war would be a disaster to mankind. Despite this unanimity on certain general propositions, the revulsion against nuclear weapons is not a dynamic force of even strength throughout the world and there are widely differing views as between regions and even within many individual countries with respect to the measures necessary or possible to deal with the problems of the nuclear age.

12. Broadly speaking, however, it is possible to distinguish between two major trends in popular attitudes toward nuclear weapons. In the Western world and in a few nations in Asia the dominant trend is toward reluctant acceptance of the fact that nuclear weapons are necessary for the common defense. In much of Asia and the Middle East the dominant trend among those who hold any opinions on nuclear weapons is to emphasize the dangers inherent in their existence and to press for their control or outlawing without particular regard to the complicated problems of Free World defense and security.

13. In Western Europe and the Americas there continues to be some opposition to the testing of nuclear weapons on the ground that it constitutes a danger to human life. Nevertheless, this concern has not produced widespread and strong pressures for an immediate and unconditional ban on tests. This may be due in part to apathy, but it also reflects a fairly widespread acceptance among informed people of the view that some risks in testing are essential to Western defense and of the proposition that a permanent test ban should be made effective by measures of inspection and control.

14. Attitudes towards other aspects of the nuclear weapons control problem follow a similar pattern in the West. There is great interest in disarmament, including propositions for "nuclear free zones" and disengagement schemes. There is hope that sincere and pro-

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longed negotiations might bear fruit, reducing the danger of war and the economic burdens of defense. Even in Western Europe important voices demand that the terms for safeguards be scaled down, and some risks and possible loss of military advantage be accepted so that the circle might be broken and real progress made toward controls and disarmament. Nevertheless, Soviet proposals are generally viewed with skepticism and suspicion and there are no strong pressures for large-scale concessions merely to reach agreement.

15. Barring an effective disarmament agreement, the Western public generally sees no alternative to a defense strategy based primarily on the nuclear deterrent. Initially, at least, the public in Western Europe believed that a nuclear defense strategy offered a means of holding down the economic and social costs that would otherwise have been necessary in maintaining large and ready conventional forces. With the Soviet advances in nuclear weapons capabilities has come recognition that the West must not lag behind in weapons technology if the deterrent is to remain effective.

16. Fears that the US might withdraw from Europe at some future date or prove unwilling to risk war in defense of Western European interests also have been elements influencing public opinion in favor of national programs for the development of nuclear weapons. National pride and the desire to gain great power status and to exert greater influence on US policy have been important factors in France and the UK tending to override basic fears of the weapons.

17. The launching of Sputnik I occasioned considerable soul searching in the West. There were fears that the USSR had moved ahead of the US in nuclear delivery capabilities and in this situation neutralism, and even pacifism gained some ground in Western Europe. But confidence in the deterrent strength of the West has been somewhat restored by post Sputnik progress in US missile development. For the most part, the public in the NATO area and in other countries relying on the US deterrent believe that it is still effective, and that alliance or alignment remains the best guarantee of their security.

18. Throughout much of Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia the people generally lack knowledge concerning nuclear weapons and perceive only dimly their implications. Many of these peoples are fearful of the consequences of nuclear war, concerned over the effects of testing, in favor of nuclear disarmament, and opposed to any stationing of nuclear weapons in their countries.

19. But for the most part they are not faced with concrete issues and tend to be apathetic toward the more general problems. They tend to feel that the nuclear problem is involved in the great power struggle over which they have no control, or they are so deeply involved in struggles for independence or livelihood that they have little time to reflect on world problems. People in these areas tend to accept and follow, usually passively, the positions taken by their leaders.

20. Informed circles in Latin America have evidenced deep concern over the dangers of nuclear war, and there is much interest throughout the area in disarmament. Nevertheless, while desiring that the US take a more flexible position on disarmament, a majority of the informed persons in Latin America generally recognize the importance to their own security of the US deterrent. Even in Mexico, where one of the highest levels of radioactivity in the world has aroused popular concern, there is no great pressure for a suspension of tests.

21. In the Arab world and much of Southeast Asia, informed circles emphasize the dangers of the nuclear situation, without much regard for the problems of defense in the non-Communist world. They see this situation as part of the great power struggle which could get out of hand with the small nations as probable victims. They hope, by remaining neutral, to escape this threat and they attempt to exert pressures on the great powers to accept controls on testing and nuclear weapons. Their views on the merits of any proposition tend to be colored by a pre-existing distrust of the West, and they are fre-

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quently more inclined to accept the seemingly reasonable Soviet proposals than those of the West.

22. India and Japan remain exceptional cases in Asia in the depth of popular concern over the nuclear situation. While the masses in India have only the vaguest notion of nuclear matters, Nehru's warnings have made some impression. The Japanese, the only people to have experienced a nuclear attack, have developed what amounts to a national phobia regarding the use or testing of nuclear weapons. In Japan no one can escape the deluge of comment and exhortation on the subject, at times including daily radio bulletins on the fallout-count. Opposition to testing is vocal and insistent in both countries and there is relatively little concern, except in limited circles in Japan, that a test ban or other controls be backed with adequate safeguards. Neither the Indian nor the Japanese public want their countries to have anything to do with nuclear weapons, although there may be a softening in the Japanese attitude in the future as Japan develops a potential to produce its own weapons, or if there are indications that Communist China possesses nuclear weapons. The peoples of both nations would view the use of nuclear weapons in almost any circumstances as an unmitigated disaster.

23. Nevertheless, even in India and Japan, the public has become a bit more discerning in its evaluation of Bloc propaganda on nuclear issues over the past year. Soviet advances in weapons technology have had a sobering effect, and the more truculent tone of Soviet and Chinese Communist propaganda — some of it directed at these two countries — has reminded Japan, and to some extent India, that their security is bound up with the fate of the non-Communist world and with the US deterrent. At the same time there is evidence that the press and informed circles recognize that Soviet propaganda on test bans and disarmament does not always correspond to Soviet actions. There was a strong reaction in both countries to the USSR's resumption of tests in 1958. The *Times of India* stated that the USSR prefers "paper agreement and declarations unsupported by actualities" and complained that Khrushchev is more interested in striking attractive poses than in getting on with the difficult task of genuine disarmament. However, these trends toward a more discerning view of the Soviet position have not resulted in greater support for the Western position; the US and West are still criticized for what is generally believed to be excessive rigidity and caution in insisting on inspection and controls.

24. In all regions of the non-Communist world, the fears with respect to the nuclear situation show most clearly during periods of high tension and crises. There is generally very little confidence that any but the smallest wars would be fought without nuclear weapons and little faith that such wars could be contained. Strong pressures are exerted against any nation moving unilaterally in a local situation where its actions could eventually involve other friends or allies. There is considerable support for UN intervention to observe, control, and police areas in which there is a threat to the peace.

25. In popular thinking about local wars little attention has been given to the possible implications of small (under one KT) nuclear weapons. The prevailing view appears to be that there is little difference between large and small weapons in terms of the difficulties involved in limiting the conflict or in the nondesirability of their use. The public is generally not impressed by distinctions between "clean" and "dirty" weapons.

26. Not all believe that small wars involving nuclear weapons would lead inevitably to big wars. There is, for example, a small but vocal group in the UK which has advanced the thesis that the balance of nuclear power among the great powers would serve to enforce caution in any local conflict involving great power interests, whether or not nuclear weapons were used. According to this theory, both sides would appreciate that the costs of total satisfaction in the local conflict might be the progressive raising of the ante to the general war level. Given this appreciation, there would follow a tacit understanding to

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limit objectives and to restrain the tests of arms and wills to the local area, as in the Korean War.

27. Finally, it should be said that there are various groups in the world, perhaps most articulate in India, who believe that the strategy of deterrence and the piling up of armaments can have only one end — nuclear holocaust. A small group in the UK which holds such views has been actively promoting an old ideal, pacifism, updated for the nuclear age. This group advocates the unilateral scrapping of all Western nuclear armaments, depending on moral strength to deter and overcome Soviet military strength and its materialistic philosophy. To date, however, pacifism has relatively few adherents and has not caught the imagination of youth to the extent that it did in the early 1930's.

B. The Sino-Bloc Bloc

28. There is little positive information available with respect to popular attitudes within the Sino-Soviet Bloc. We believe that the people on the mainland of China know little more than they are told by the regime about nuclear weapons. If this is true, only informed and sophisticated circles would have a realistic understanding of the power of nuclear weapons and of the West, both of which have been derided as "Paper Tigers." While the Chinese Communist leaders have reportedly mentioned in private the possibility of 300,000,000 casualties on the mainland in the event of nuclear warfare, they have publicly emphasized that the Socialist bloc would triumph and that the cause of world communism would be advanced if the imperialists should start a nuclear war. In any event, the regime appears capable of limiting the expression of any fears concerning nuclear war that may exist.

29. The experience of numerous observers in the USSR indicates that there is widespread concern over the chances of war. However, the people appear largely convinced that their government is working sincerely for peace and disarmament.

III. EFFECTS ON GOVERNMENT POLICIES

A. The Non-Communist World

30. The development of nuclear capabilities has exerted a pervasive influence on the foreign policies of practically all nations; on some nations the influence has been profound. Even those governments in areas far removed from the likely centers of possible nuclear conflict are sensitive to the dangers and possible world-wide consequences of nuclear war. The existence of nuclear weapons and the pressure of public opinion have served to make most governments more cautious in the defense of national interests; the dangers of nuclear war have given spur to efforts to negotiate various agreements with the Bloc to reduce tensions and the dangers of war; and nuclear weapons developments have brought forth important changes in defense policies.

31. Nevertheless, it is difficult to isolate and weigh precisely the influence of the nuclear weapons situation, even in the case of defense policy. National policies reflect the working of other important factors — the basic incompatibility of Communist and Free World objectives, the reduced power position of Western Europe as compared with the US and the USSR, the dependence of much of the non-Communist world on the US for strategic security, and the continuing search of the peoples and governments in the former colonial areas for a solution to insecurity, want, and the problems of modernizing their societies.

32. To date European governments have supported the theory that allied forces must be prepared to maintain and use nuclear weapons as an essential support on which they depend in meeting Soviet pressures. Although Norway and Denmark have declined to accept IRBM sites on their territories, they have joined all the other NATO nations in affirming the strategic necessity for a nuclear defense system. In Italy agreements to install IRBMs were in process of completion when the Fanfani government fell. In France negotiations towards this end were stalled by nationalist trends in French policy which

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have been intensified by de Gaulle's advent to power and not by any basic opposition on the part of the government to nuclear weapons. Even West Germany, which has been subject to a broad range of Soviet threats, including total devastation if it were to permit nuclear weapons on its territory, has approved in principle the equipping of the Bundeswehr with tactical nuclear weapons. Significantly, however, most of the governments involved have proceeded with the utmost delicacy, and have attempted where possible to minimize publicity or public discussion of the IRBM question.

33. Soviet technological advances have not frightened the Western allies into isolation from the US because by-and-large they recognize their ultimate dependence on US protection. But there has been increased concern on the part of some Europeans for the protection of their own local interests independent of their role in the over-all Western defense system.

34. The UK has pushed ahead with its program of developing some deterrent nuclear forces of its own and France is seeking to join the "nuclear club." While there has been some criticism from the British Labor Party over what is described as excessive investment in the nuclear field, this has caused no fundamental turning away from the principal strategy of nuclear deterrence. Recent British defense ministry thinking may indicate, however, that the government is increasingly concerned that there may be insufficient conventional capabilities for limited war situations. There appears to be a tendency in official circles to divide military problems into those which deal with nuclear armament, and those, usually pertaining to traditional British interests outside the NATO area, which do not.

35. Although the NATO governments are determined to maintain a strong and unified defense (at least to the extent that the economic costs are politically feasible) most remain sensitive to popular pressures for nuclear controls, for disarmament, and for caution in the defense of national interests. While generally able to lead public opinion on issues considered vital, European governments find it necessary, and even desirable, to explore possibilities for negotiations with the USSR, to examine all Soviet proposals, and to choose carefully the propitious political moment for announcing the adoption of any policy which might be attacked as contributing to an increase in international tensions.

36. Moreover, the European governments themselves are extremely sensitive to the dangers of war and are little inclined to support military actions, or otherwise to take a positive position in situations which do not involve their vital interests. At the same time, they are more than ever concerned that their advice and counsel be heard by the US, so that actions will not be carried out unilaterally having ultimate consequences for all. Particularly in France, there is a strong desire for a greater voice in Western policy.

37. The Canadian Government also fully accepts the implications of reliance on nuclear weapons and of alliance with the US. However, Canada desires that the UN be given a greater role and increased capabilities as a mediator and policeman in local disputes, and that disarmament negotiations be pursued more vigorously. Canada has been particularly sensitive to unilateral UK actions during the Suez crisis and to US actions in the Taiwan Straits.

38. It is particularly difficult to assess the impact of the nuclear weapons situation on the Arab states of the Middle East and North Africa. While fear of involvement in nuclear war has been a factor in Arab attitudes towards Western bases, especially in Morocco, these attitudes are primarily motivated by Arab nationalism and local political considerations. Nasser may believe that a nuclear stalemate exists which provides him greater opportunity to maneuver between East and West and greater latitude in subverting the Arab world. But he is probably also concerned over the prospect of the Middle East being turned into a nuclear battleground through miscalculation on his own part or by the West or the USSR. Moreover, his initiative, or lack thereof, in most situations is almost certainly

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influenced by a host of other considerations which outweigh thoughts about nuclear weapons.

39. Developments in nuclear capabilities over the past year served to convince the Indian Government even more of the basic wisdom of its neutralist foreign policy, which derives from historical, cultural, and religious factors as well as from an obsession with the consequences of nuclear war. The people provide strong support for the official view that pacts and alliances increase tensions and that the nuclear armaments race only insures a greater catastrophy at some future time when heightened tensions and a fatal miscalculation may result in general war. The government's concern that disarmament be tackled as a priority world problem has been intensified by the advent of ICBMs. While recognizing that practical security problems are involved in the disarmament issue, the Indian Government exerts every effort to encourage both the US and USSR to make gestures and concessions that might lead in time to substantial disarmament agreements.

40. The Japanese Government continues to rely on US deterrent power for security. Developments in Soviet nuclear capabilities have not weakened its determination to remain allied with the US. At the same time, the strong popular revulsion to nuclear weapons and awareness of Japan's vulnerability to nuclear attack have impelled the government to take measures to minimize the risks of Japan's involvement in nuclear warfare. In pursuit of this objective the government opposes the introduction of nuclear weapons into Japan and seeks revision of the US-Japanese Security Treaty to give Japan a veto over the operational use of US bases. We believe that the Japanese Government would consent to the use of US bases in Japan for the launching of air attacks, nuclear or otherwise, against targets on the mainland of Asia only if Japanese leaders were convinced that Japan itself were directly threatened.[2]

[2] For fuller treatment see NIE 41-58, "Probable Developments in Japan's International Orientation," 23 December 1958.

B. The Sino-Soviet Bloc

41. Soviet thinking and foreign and military policy have been strongly influenced by a growing appreciation of the power of nuclear weapons. The Soviet leaders have made strong efforts to build a substantial nuclear capability of their own, but they have continued to maintain and strengthen a broad range of nonnuclear capabilities.[3]

42. They have also tried to reduce the military and political usefulness of US nuclear capabilities by attempting to make US overseas bases untenable and by increasing the inhibitions attached to any use of nuclear weapons. Recognizing the world-wide fear of nuclear war, the USSR has sought to garb itself with slogans of "peace," to adopt attractive and simplified positions on disarmament, and to emphasize the dangers that go with any association with the US defense effort.

43. The development of nuclear weapons and their potential for devastation in war probably played a major role in the 1956 revision in Communist doctrine, which now holds that military conflict with the capitalist states is no longer "fatally inevitable." This revision was part and parcel of a new emphasis on political means of struggle which became increasingly evident after the death of Stalin.

44. The USSR's activities in its struggle with the West continue to be manifest principally in the political and economic realms. The image of military strength resulting from Soviet advances is, however, an integral part of the setting in which the USSR pursues this struggle. Moscow evidently regards its real and presumed military strength as a significant asset in political warfare. Soviet leaders probably estimate that if they launched a general war at present, even with surprise nuclear attacks, the USSR would suffer unacceptable damage from US nuclear retaliation. On the other hand, they are probably confident that their own nuclear capabilities, even though not as great as those of the US,

[3] For a fuller discussion of Soviet strategy see paragraphs 99-117 of NIE 11-4-58, "Main Trends in Soviet Capabilities and Policies, 1958-1963," 23 December 1958.

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have grown to the point where they constitute a powerful deterrent to the US. It is therefore probable that in the Soviet view both sides are now militarily deterred from deliberately initiating an all-out nuclear war or from reacting to any crisis in a manner which would gravely risk such a war, unless vital national interests at home or abroad were considered to be in jeopardy. However, we believe the Soviet leaders do not exclude the possibility of nuclear war resulting from accident or miscalculation.

45. While we believe that the Soviet leaders do not at present intend to pursue their objectives by employing their own forces, they will recognize, particularly in consequence of the policies they are pursuing to compel a retraction of Western power by political means, that situations might arise in which the use of force would seem essential to one side or the other. In such situations the Soviets would prefer to provide logistic and other support for local operations in which only non-Soviet forces participated directly. Their objectives in such operations would be limited, and they would seek to avoid direct Soviet involvement, to limit the geographic area of engagement, and to prevent the use of nuclear weapons by either side.

46. Soviet planners probably consider, however, that such limitations might be impossible in some instances, and that encounters between their own and Western forces might result. In this event, they would prefer to minimize the amount of force employed in such situations in order to limit the scale of conflict and the degree of their own involvement as much as possible. For example, they would almost certainly wish to avoid the use of nuclear weapons. In deciding whether to employ their own forces in any particular local situation the Soviets would have to balance the risk of provoking a train of counteractions, possibly leading to general war, against the stakes involved in the area of local conflict. They probably believe that the West's military posture and doctrine rest increasingly upon the use of nuclear weapons, even in limited wars. But they probably also view their own nuclear deterrent capabilities as already having raised the threshold at which the West would react in such a manner. Thus, they probably believe that the opportunities for pressures against Western positions and for bluff have been enhanced.

47. The Chinese Communist leaders were among the first to proclaim that Sputnik shifted the strategic balance of power decisively in favor of the Bloc and they have been calling for a more assertive policy to exploit this alleged shift. Moreover, their propaganda line has been that a nuclear war would mean only the final defeat of capitalism. Nevertheless, we believe that Chinese Communist conduct in the Taiwan Straits situation is evidence that they are sensitive to the nuclear power of the US.

IV. PROBABLE TRENDS IN ATTITUDES AND POLICIES

48. Barring an effective disarmament agreement, the people and governments of the world will almost certainly be confronted with a continued growth in nuclear weapons capabilities. Technological advances will bring a further diversification of weapons types and some reduction in the costs of production of certain nuclear weapon systems. In this situation there will probably be a gradual spread of nuclear capabilities to "fourth countries."

49. The continuation of the nuclear armaments race and the development of nuclear capabilities by "fourth countries" will occasion fresh outbursts of concern throughout the world. There will almost certainly be, from time to time, renewed and vigorous demands for a cessation of nuclear tests and for measures to control the deployment and use of nuclear weapons. But the dominant trend in public attitudes will probably be one of apathy or resigned acceptance of the existence and development of nuclear capabilities. In the main, peoples and governments are conditioned to living with the threat inherent in the existence of modern nuclear weapons, and we believe that future developments in the nuclear weapons situation are not likely to produce any sudden or marked changes in present attitudes or policies over the next few years.

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50. Nevertheless, the development of nuclear weapon systems of increasing range, accuracy, and sophistication will continue to influence strongly the conduct of foreign policies. There will probably be a tendency to caution, and if possible to compromise, in disputes which might involve the interests of the great powers and precipitate nuclear war. Neutralism may become increasingly attractive as a means of escaping responsibility for and involvement in the great power struggle between the US and the Sino-Soviet Bloc, although the extent to which this will occur will depend upon a number of contingent developments.

51. Developments in US policies and nuclear capabilities will have great effects on the policies of both those nations committed to the West and the countries which already are neutralist. The entire non-Communist world will watch closely for any sign that the US deterrent is becoming less effective because of technological factors or that US determination to stand beside the exposed and threatened areas of the world is weakening. If members of the Western Alliance came to believe that the US was using technological advances to reduce its military presence overseas it would become increasingly difficult to convince the peoples and governments of Western Europe and Asia that the US remained willing to defend their interests. In this case, a further development of the present trend toward a hard line in Soviet policy leading to increased fears of the chances of general war might cause some members of the Western Alliance to weaken their commitments to the Alliance. Particularly in those countries which might have developed a modest nuclear deterrent of their own, there might be a disposition to flirt with the idea of neutrality. Certain nations around the periphery of the Bloc might lean toward the Bloc in an effort to gain security through accommodation. A belief in the West that the US had fallen behind could contribute to neutralist trends and greatly complicate the problem of maintaining a firm united front against Soviet probes and pressures.

52. If US technological advances and policies lead the Free World to remain confident that the US will defend local interests against Soviet aggression, Soviet efforts to exploit their own growing capabilities could have the opposite effect. Soviet probes and pressures could continue, as in the past, to serve to convince the people of Western Europe that neutralism, unless supported by a formidable indigenous nuclear capability, offered no surcease from Soviet pressures nor a workable substitute for common defense. A similar reaction might develop in Japan, which has generally reacted stoutly to Russian threats. Indian leaders at the national level are already showing increasing concern over the external and internal Communist threat. They probably see in recent criticism of their policies in the Communist press indications of less sympathetic and cordial state relations. We believe that privately, at least, they may adopt a less critical attitude toward Western defense measures and might show greater understanding for Western suspicions of Soviet behavior. Similar tendencies will probably develop in the UAR if the USSR continues to countenance, if not actively to support, serious subversive efforts in Syria and Iraq.

53. At the same time, the development of offensive and defensive weapon systems will complicate the problem of assessing the relative balance of military power and the effectiveness of deterrent forces at any given moment. It is possible that one side or the other will believe itself to possess a temporary and substantial military advantage when it does not, or will believe that it is substantially inferior when it is not. Such beliefs could have a profound influence on the conduct of national policies and on the world situation. The complexities of this situation and the many unknown factors involved will make for continuing and growing uncertainties.

54. A period of rapid change in weapons development and of uncertanty as to the relative balance of military power could put an increasing premium on striking the first blow. As the time period required for preparation of a devastating attack diminishes, the prob-

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lem of interpreting the intent of the other side — particularly during periods of crisis when precautionary military activities had been initiated by both sides — will become even more critical. The relatively greater certainty of retaliation resulting from the development of mobile missile systems or hardened sites would strengthen the operation of the deterrent on both sides. Even so, either side might decide that the deterrent effect of the other side's strength or posture was outweighed by the necessity to launch the first strike as the best hope for survival.[4]

55. We are unable to reach any confident judgments on the probable reactions of peoples and governments in the event general war between the US and the USSR appeared imminent. Under some contingencies, there would be no time for public opinion to operate; the actions of the governments would depend on quick judgments.

56. In a situation of a more gradual buildup of tensions, Soviet threats might induce widespread anxiety and consternation. Unless confidence in the ultimate effectiveness of the Western deterrent could be maintained, the USSR might be able to induce several of the less resolute governments in Western Europe, the Middle East, and Asia to proclaim their neutrality and to deny the US access to bases or military facilities in their territories. Fundamental changes in popular attitudes and official policies could come with little warning in the midst of a crisis situation. Such changes might also come about as a result of unexpected demonstrations of the effect of an important technological breakthrough.

57. Although some additional nations will probably obtain nuclear weapons in one way or another, there will almost certainly continue to be strong moral and political inhibitions on their use. Indications are that the people of Western Europe would approve their use in the defense of vital interests, particularly to defend against local or general Communist attacks in the European area. But we believe that fears of the consequences of nuclear war are so deep and profound that no European government would actually accede to the use of nuclear weapons in local conflicts anywhere until efforts at a negotiated settlement had clearly failed or a critical blow to Western security appeared imminent or had actually been struck.

58. It is possible, however, that development of extremely low-yield weapons might bring, in time, a substantial shift in public attitudes so that use of such weapons would be viewed as proper in local conflicts. But we do not foresee an early lessening of the political and psychological restraints on the use of nuclear weapons.

[4] The Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army, and the Assistant Chief of Naval Operations for Intelligence, Department of the Navy, would prefer that this paragraph be deleted but would accept its inclusion if the following language were added:

"In any case, we do not believe that the Soviet leaders are content with the *status quo*, either in the military or political field. They will almost certainly push ahead in their efforts to achieve a clear military superiority over the US. But despite further improvement in Soviet capabilities over the next five years, we believe it unlikely that the USSR will become confident that it can attack the US without receiving unacceptable damage in return. This judgment assumes the maintenance and improvement of US armed strength and the absence of an unforeseen Soviet technological breakthrough of major military significance."

The Director of Intelligence and Research, Department of State, would recommend inclusion of this additional language in the body of the estimate without qualification.

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